



Forensic Accounting Course Description



Instructor: David Austill, J.D., LL.M., M.B.A., C.P.A.
Visiting Fulbright Scholar
Professor of Accounting and Business Law
Union University, Jackson, Tennessee, U.S.A.

Course Description: Forensic Accounting (also known as “fraud accounting” or “fraud examination”) is a graduate-level course that focuses on the nature of deception and fraud and in the investigation and detection of fraud within a private or public organization. This course is designed to enhance a student’s understanding of the emerging field of forensic accounting and to think critically to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to establish, maintain or follow anti-fraud policies within an organization or to conduct a fraud investigation. This course is not intended to be a course solely for accountants; thus, it will not be a theoretical course. Effort will be made to make the course as practical as possible for a broad range of students having an interest in fraud examination, fraud prosecution, and anti-fraud policy. Some group work will be required. The course has both lecture and case analysis elements.

I. Course Learning Objectives:

By the successful completion of this course, the student will:

1. Develop an understanding of the nature of fraud and deception from both a personal and technical perspective.

2. Develop skills in evaluating risks of fraud or situations more likely to result in fraudulent activity within an organization.
3. Develop an understanding of internal accounting controls, why they are important in preventing fraud, and how the lack of such controls create an atmosphere conducive to fraud.
4. Develop an understanding of and experience in using some important and common evaluative methods used in fraud investigation to assess whether there is a heightened likelihood of fraud.
5. Develop business decision-making and problem-solving skills through the use of problems and cases.
6. Survey financial ratios and other tools for financial statement analysis in searching for financial statement irregularities.
7. Learn about the roles of persons or groups involved in fraud investigation, fraud prevention, anti-fraud policy development, and fraud prosecution.
8. Understand particular areas where fraud commonly occurs and learn specific fraud detection methods for those situations.
9. Learn how computers are used to commit fraud or to detect fraud.
10. Understand the nature of fraud prosecutions, the legal process for fraud prosecutions, and how to maintain and safeguard evidence for prosecution.
11. Understand the nature of fraud examination and the interviewing process in gathering and evaluating evidence.
12. Apply the knowledge, tools and methods of fraud detection to a practical case.
13. Learn about the role of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners in promoting the field of forensic accounting.

II. Format:

Forensic Accounting will be a new course for all students, but it will require only a basic understanding of the accounting process and financial statements. The graduate student will not need to be an accountant to perform well in the course. It is recommended, however, that non-accountants with little knowledge of accounting find a study partner who has a good knowledge of accounting and financial statements. The format for the course is basically lecture, but there will be regular seminar meetings in which the fraud examination principles are applied through case studies. From time-to-time the professor will require the students to work an assignment from the textbook for discussion at the next class.

Questions and comments are encouraged in class. The professor likes dialog in his classes for several reasons.